

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD  
Meeting of Monday, December 17, 2018  
Ipswich Town Hall | 25 Green Street

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Monday, December 17, 2018 at 7:00pm in Meeting Room A.

Nishan Mootafian called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Board Members present: Nishan Mootafian, Chair; William Whitmore, Vice Chair; Linda Alexson; William Craft; Edward Rauscher

Also present: Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

Abbreviations used: DPW, Department of Public Works

Public Information: Agenda; Meeting Packet

**Welcome/Announcements**

None.

**Citizen Queries**

Erika Turner (121 High Street) addressed the Board with her concerns about the crosswalk in front of the Middle/High School on High Street. She informed the Board that last week, her daughters were almost hit by a utility van speeding over the bridge. She has been in touch with Representative Brad Hill to discuss having a flashing pedestrian crossing sign installed. Ms. Turner provided Board members with photos of skid marks on the road from two separate incidents. She acknowledged that police officers make an effort to be present at the crosswalk during the hours in which children are coming and going from school, but often students are arriving early and leaving late. Mr. Marino stated that he had spoken with Rep. Hill about installing a crosswalk system, but it will cost about \$25,000. They are waiting for funding to be allocated from the State, as Town budget funds have already been earmarked. He stated that in the meantime, signs warning drivers of an upcoming school zone will be installed before the bridge in an effort to slow traffic.

**Vote for Reappointment of Town Accountant, Stephanie Frontiera**

Town Accountant Stephanie Frontiera appeared before the Board seeking reappointment to her current position for another three years. Mr. Marino strongly recommended the Board vote to reappoint Ms. Frontiera, and shared a letter of endorsement from former Town Manager James Engel. Ms. Frontiera shared that she has been working for the Town for almost five years, and cited the past year as the most challenging within the Finance Department as staff turnover occurred. She is confident in her newly hired Accounts Payable Clerk, and praised her Accounting Specialist and the Finance Director. Mr. Craft and Mr. Rauscher spoke highly of Ms. Frontiera's work ethic and integrity.

*Vote: Mr. Craft moved to reappoint Stephanie Frontiera as Town Accountant for three years, and Mr. Rauscher seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

**PUBLIC HEARING: Electric Restoration Fees (1 of 2)**

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to open the Public Hearing, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Ray Leczynski (Electric Department Business Manager) appeared before the Board for the first of two Public Hearings regarding proposed Electric Restoration Fees. Mr. Leczynski reviewed the four steps of the process:

- Step 1 – A customer is 60 days overdue. A notice is mailed informing them that they are overdue.
- Step 2 – A customer is 75 days overdue. A second notice is mailed.
- Step 3 – A customer is 90 days overdue. The customer is notified that their power is now subject to termination.

- Step 4 – 72 hours after Step 3, a tag is placed on the customer's door informing them that their power will be terminated.

Mr. Leczynski explained that if the technician arrives at a home to turn off the power, the resident can pay their bill onsite, but a \$25 will be applied. If a resident has already been disconnected and a technician is called to restore power during regular business hours, a \$50 fee will be applied. If the technician is called after regular business hours, a \$200 fee will be applied. Mr. Craft noted an asterisk that indicated higher amounts will apply to commercial accounts, and Mr. Leczynski explained that this refers to commercial customers that would require a line crew to restore electricity, and the additional fees would be applied on a case by case basis. Ms. Alexson suggested that at Step 2, notice be sent to the customer by certified mail. Mr. Leczynski expressed concern for the cost to the Town, stating that per cycle, this could cost the Town around \$300-\$400. Ms. Alexson, Mr. Craft, and Mr. Whitmore all suggested recouping the cost by adding it to the restoration fees. Mr. Leczynski also clarified that when an overdue customer rents their home, notice of overdue payments is only sent to the tenant, not the owner of the residence. Mr. Whitmore suggesting adding a table to the Electric Department's website showing changes between the old and new restoration fees.

There were no public questions. The second of two Public Hearings will be held on January 7, 2019.

*Vote: Mr. Whitmore voted to close the Public Hearing, and Mr. Craft seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Dam Update**

Vicki Halmen (Water & Wastewater Director) appeared before the Board to provide an update on dam repairs. She showed photos of the progress, and stated that the project is on time and on budget, with an end date of February 2019 and a cost of \$1.37 million. To protect the reservoir, erosion controls have been installed and booms have been put in the water. The top of the dam has been widened to accommodate construction equipment. Seepage locations are being updated to allow the dam to leak in a controlled manner. Ms. Halmen commissioned a 3D rendering of theoretical dam expansion, which would increase the dam's water capacity from 61 million gallons to 73 million gallons, but pointed out that some houses on the northern bank near High Street would require retainer walls to protect them from flooding. She stressed that even if the water level raise were to happen, the Town has no intention of taking property. Mr. Craft inquired about inspecting the bottom of the reservoir, but Ms. Halmen stated that the water levels are not low enough for an in-depth examination. She stated that during the drought of 2016, the department was able to inspect some of the conditions. The project is on budget and on schedule. Ms. Halmen stated that any money saved will be used for other Water Department projects.

### **Ipswich YMCA Update on Programs and Services**

Mr. Mootafian disclosed that he has been a board member of the Ipswich YMCA for over a decade. Chris Bevilacqua (Ipswich YMCA Executive Director) appeared before the Board to provide an update on the Y's operations this year. Currently the Y provides 65 youth programs, including home school groups, Friday Fun Night, summer vacation programs, preschool classes, and childcare. There are 45 adult groups, including the Connector group for seniors, which was developed in cooperation with the Ipswich Council on Aging. The Y currently has about 6,000 members, and is making an effort to hold more off-site activities at their summer camp location in Rowley. This year the Y provided \$126,000 in financial assistance for childcare and membership, and \$20,000 in summer camp scholarships. In the coming year they plan to renovate the locker rooms, begin an after-school program for Rowley students in grades kindergarten through eighth, and work with Open Door Food Pantry and Three Sisters Farm to develop a food assistance program. Mr. Bevilacqua stated that transportation for children to and from after school programs is an ongoing effort. Ms. Alexson noted membership rates for family and individuals and asked about senior discounts. Mr. Bevilacqua stated that many seniors qualify for financial assistance, so the financial assistance rate is often applied to a senior's membership instead of an age-based discount. Ms. Alexson spoke on behalf of residents who have raised concerns about the Y's waterpark fee structure. Many residents have been charged to enter the waterpark when they are supervising children. Mr. Bevilacqua answered that the fee structure was strict at first, but will be changed this summer to be more accommodating to visitors acting as supervisors for children with memberships.

### **Annual Town Meeting Memo**

Mr. Marino announced that the warrant will be opened on January 7, 2019, and citizen petitions are due by 4pm on March 11, 2019. A Public Hearing is scheduled for March 18, 2019. Ms. Alexson requested a status update on electronic voting, and Mr. Marino shared that the Town Moderator will be reaching out to a company about free beta testing for the spring Annual Town Meeting.

### **Consent Agenda**

#### One Day Liquor License Applications

- i. All Alcohol – Ipswich Masonic Temple on January 5, 2019 for a retirement party
- ii. All Alcohol – Trustees of Reservations Fundraisers at Castle Hill, 290 Argilla Road on February 8, 9 with snow/inclement weather date of 2/10. Contingent upon obtaining tent permits from Code Enforcement.

#### Partial Sidewalk Blocking

- i. Chris Carye CWC Construction for 39-43 Market Street for removal and installation new siding on first story, 400 sq. ft. from 12/18-12/21.

*Vote: Mr. Craft moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Approval of Minutes**

November 19, 2018

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the minutes, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Town Manager Report**

#### **FACILITIES**

Mr. Marino has been acting as interim Facilities Director. He has met with plowing contractors for the schools, and addressed heating and roof leak issues at the High School and Winthrop School. The search for Facilities Director is down to three finalists, with two of the three holding extensive experience in Green Communities.

#### **FIRE LIEUTENANT**

James McInnis has been promoted to Lieutenant.

#### **BUDGET INCREASES**

The School budget will receive a 2.5% increase, and the Town budget will receive a 3.19% increase. The School budget increase is slightly lower due to debt within the schools.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Marino reported that the conversion from Munis to Harpers Payroll has gone smoothly for two pay cycles now. Biweekly payroll is scheduled to begin on January 17, 2019.

#### **New Business**

Mr. Rauscher provided an update on the Electric Light Department Subcommittee. The Subcommittee recently met to discuss the wind turbines in town; one is Town-owed, and one is owned by a private company. The turbine is out of order, and there has been speculation that the company may go bankrupt. The Subcommittee has been discussing what steps to take in regards to the second turbine. Additionally, the Subcommittee is exploring ways to be creative with usage of the powerplant. They have suggested requiring future 40B projects to supply their own power generators. Mr. Rauscher would like further discussion of the powerplant to be put on the agenda for the first quarter of 2019.

Mr. Rauscher provided an update on the Water & Wastewater Committee. He cites the pipes under High Street as a continued major concern, and stressed that money needs to be designated for repairs.

Mr. Mootafian announced the schedule for upcoming meetings regarding budgets.

- January 22, 2019 – Regularly scheduled Tri Board meeting. Mr. Marino and Sarah Johnson (Finance Director) will be presenting the municipal budget. The Board will discuss the capital budget and debt.
- January 28, 2019 – The Select Board will hold a regular meeting and vote on the budget.
- January 29, 2019 – Finance Committee meeting.
- January 30, 2019 – Second budget meeting. Mr. Mootafian will not be in attendance; Mr. Whitmore will run the meeting.
- February Select Board meetings will focus on budget hearings only.

- February 19, 2019 – The Select Board will meet on a Tuesday to make up for a missed Monday meeting on Presidents Day.
- April 6, 2019 – Bean Counting.

Mr. Whitmore would like to explore the possibility of closing Market Street for town-wide events this spring and summer. He suggested closing the streets off to pedestrians only for the Chowder Festival and similar events. The other Board members agreed that this could be beneficial for town events. Mr. Rauscher noted parking as a concern when coordinating events.

Ms. Alexson reported that the Public Safety Committee met last week, and has received four responses to a request for a feasibility study.

#### **Old Business**

Ms. Alexson requested an update on Ant Bicycle. Mr. Marino stated that he has not heard back from the company after several calls. The discarded bicycles have been collected and are being stored at the DPW lot if the company decided to collect them.

Ms. Alexson asked for an update on the Lord Square speed limit change. Mr. Marino stated that the speed limit signs have been ordered, and he will check on their status.

#### **Miscellaneous and Correspondence**

None.

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to adjourn, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

*The Select Board adjourned at 8:54pm.*

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page  
12.19.18*